

The Feld's support school curriculum programs and have developed Circus Fit, a national youth fitness program. To help preserve the Asian elephant, Kenneth Feld established the Center for Elephant Conservation (CEC) in central Florida in 1995. This state-of-the-art breeding and retirement facility is dedicated to the conservation, breeding, and study of the Asian elephant.

In each generation, the Feld family has continued to capture children of all ages by preserving the great American circus and led the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, The Greatest Show on Earth, into the 21st century.

I thank my colleagues for joining me in recognizing the contributions of the Feld Family to American culture and entertainment.

TRIBUTE TO PHILLIP S. FIGA
UNITED STATES DISTRICT
COURT JUDGE

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Ms. DeGETTE. Madam Speaker. I rise to honor the extraordinary life and exceptional accomplishments of United States District Court Judge Phillip S. Figa. This exceptional jurist merits both our recognition and esteem as his impressive record of civic leadership and invaluable service has improved the lives of many Coloradans.

Sadly, Judge Figa was taken from us by a brain tumor at the young age of 56 and he will be greatly missed. His passion for the law and justice and his capacity for community service were beyond measure. He molded a life of genuine accomplishment and served our Nation with distinction. His passing is a great loss to the Federal bench and our entire community.

Judge Figa was born in 1951 in Skokie, Illinois, the son of Holocaust survivors from Poland. He earned a scholarship to Northwestern University and graduated with a degree in economics. While at Northwestern, he met and married Candace Cole Figa. He went on to graduate from Cornell Law School and started his law practice in Colorado at Sherman & Howard in 1976. Four years later, Judge Figa became a founding partner of Burns, Figa & Will, P.C. and became the firm's President. For over 26 years, Judge Figa maintained a broad litigation-oriented practice and established a national reputation as an expert in the field of legal ethics. He was actively involved in the Colorado legal community and served as President of the Colorado Bar Association and as Chair of the Ethics Committee. He served on the Civil Justice Reform Act Advisory Committee and on the Colorado Commission on Judicial Discipline. He served as an instructor at the University of Denver College of Law and the National Institute of Trial Advocacy. Judge Figa was also one of the founding members of the Faculty of Federal Advocates and is credited with the development of the very successful Pro Bono Mentoring Program. As a former Chair of the Mountain States Region of the Anti-Defamation League, Judge Figa was deeply committed to fighting bigotry, extremism, anti-Semitism and supporting Holocaust awareness.

President Bush nominated Judge Figa to the United States District Court and he was confirmed by the United States Senate on October 2, 2003. During the confirmation process, Senators of both parties viewed him as highly intelligent and a fair prospective jurist. Many friends, family and associates have praised Judge Figa as "even handed" . . . "smart, caring and authentic" . . . "a great jurist" "a true humanitarian" . . . "one who brought passion and integrity to the field of law" . . . a humble and gracious man who genuinely cared about helping other people." I was honored to give the highest recommendation to the Senate Judiciary Committee. On a personal note, Judge Figa was a good friend of both me and my husband. He was loved and respected across the legal community. Judge Figa was a mensch—an upright, honorable and decent human being.

Judge Figa has been recognized with several accolades and honors including nomination to the International Society of Barristers, the American Bar Foundation and the Colorado Bar Foundation. He was honored by the Colorado Supreme Court for "outstanding leadership of the Coalition for the Independence of the Colorado Judiciary" and in January of 2006, he was named one of the Leading Judges in America by The Lawdragon. On February 4, 2008, the Anti-Defamation League will present the late Judge Figa with the Distinguished Community Service Award "for his commitment to human rights and dignity, and his dedicated service to his community, state and nation." Judge Figa lived a life that is rich in consequence and our country is a better place because of his labors. Truly, we are all diminished by the all too early passing of this remarkable gentleman and our thoughts are with Candace Figa and their two children, Ben and Elizabeth. Please join me in paying tribute to the life of United States District Court Judge Phillip S. Figa, a distinguished jurist. It is the values, leadership and dedication he exhibited during his life that serves to build a better future for all of us.

IN TRIBUTE TO MR. BOOKER
TOWNSELL

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Booker Townsell. Mr. Townsell was falsely accused along with 42 other African-American soldiers for rioting and lynching an Italian POW at Fort Lawton, an Army base in Seattle in 1944. It was the largest and longest Army courts-martial of World War II. Mr. Townsell was ultimately court-martialed and convicted with 27 others and served two years in prison. After 63 years, Booker Townsell has been fully exonerated. Mr. Townsell was not able to see this travesty reversed having died in 1984 at the age of 69. However, his family persevered until he was fully exonerated for a crime he did not commit.

Members of Mr. Townsell's family learned of Jack Hamann's, 2005 book, "On American Soil: How Justice Became a Casualty of World War II", which chronicled the Fort Lawton court martial. The Townsell family contacted

Hamann and was the first to petition the Army to reverse the conviction. The Army Review Board required each family to apply individually for a review. Bipartisan requests were made in Congress to review the case. In October, 2007, an Army review board, acting on evidence uncovered by Hamann's book, overturned Townsell's conviction. The analysis used to reverse Townsell's conviction would apply to all of the soldiers convicted, an Army lawyer who reviewed the case for the review board told The New York Times.

Hamann's investigation uncovered racial bias against the soldiers, including charges being brought immediately without the benefit of full counsel which led to their unfair convictions. This incredible story also involves Leon Jaworski, a young lieutenant who prosecuted the case for the Army and later served as special prosecutor in the Watergate case. Hamann discovered that Jaworski failed to share evidence with defense lawyers that could have exonerated the black soldiers. Hamann said it seemed suspicious that black soldiers in 1944 would participate in a lynching, given the racial attitudes in America at the time. According to his research, no black person had ever been put on trial for a lynching until then.

A lawyer who specializes in military affairs helped the Townsell family with their petition to the Army review board. The decision that overturned Townsell's conviction was a sweet victory for justice in our country.

On January 19th 2008, the family will celebrate their legal victory with a ceremony attended by Army officials to recognize the overturning of this conviction after 63 years. I am honored to have this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Townsell and to his family. Mr. Townsell's good name has now been restored.

COMMEMORATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF PHEASANTS FOREVER

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the members of Pheasants Forever for their strong legacy of environmental advocacy and conservation on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the organization.

Pheasants Forever started with a campaign for a Minnesota pheasant stamp. Since that modest beginning, the organization has demonstrated just how effective conservation at the grassroots level can be. By working with local farmers to restore marginal lands, a few pioneering Minnesotans started a movement that has spread across North America with great success. Currently the members of Pheasants Forever organize the efforts of hunters, farmers, and environmentalists in nearly 30,000 restoration projects each year. During the past 25 years, these efforts have helped to protect 4 million acres of wildlife habitat.

Pheasants Forever has accomplished great things over the past two and a half decades in the areas of critical habitat improvement, public and private land management, and public awareness and education. Hunting and